



AMERICANS for TAX REFORM



COST OF
GOVERNMENT
CENTER

February 15, 2012

The Honorable John Kline
Chairman
House Education and the Workforce Committee
Washington, DC

Dear Chairman Kline,

We write in support of your bill, H.R. 3989, the Student Success Act. The bill takes positive steps toward returning education responsibilities to state and local governments.

The Act will cut failed programs established by No Child Left Behind and decrease redundant and wasteful education spending by the federal government. Under NCLB spending has exploded, but little progress has been made to improve education for America's youth. NCLB has driven a wedge between taxpayers, school boards, and a student's education. The use of blanket standardizations to assess student achievement has failed to improve American education, demonstrating a need for flexibility and transparency in local school districts.

The Student Success Act rightfully addresses these concerns by allowing states to prioritize their own spending, rather than requiring them to abide by a national, and ineffective, metric. Terminating Federal programs and consolidating others will slash spending. It will remove costs accrued by federal bureaucracy and the resulting ignorance of local needs.

Decades of increased spending have illustrated sheer monetary volume does not guarantee a successful education system. Limiting funding authorizations to the FY 2012 appropriated levels will require federal and local officials to prioritize and evaluate education spending. No longer can failures be rewarded with more resources.

The bill also restores the burden of accountability to the states, eliminating the unsuccessful Adequate Yearly Progress, a measurement which uses standardized tests as the sole estimate for academic performance. H.R. 3989 sets potential funding increases consistent with inflation, and consolidates authorization levels into one section of the law. This allows for great transparency and accountability in education spending and precludes the use of vague language previously exploited for spending increases.

Consequently, we encourage your colleagues to cosponsor and otherwise support the Student Success Act. It places decision-making back in the hands of those most familiar with school districts' needs, increases transparency, and moves to safeguard taxpayers from ineffective education spending.

Sincerely,

Grover Norquist
President
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The Honorable John Kline
Chairman
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Washington, DC

Dear Chairman Kline,

We write to encourage your colleagues to support your bill H.R. 3990, Encouraging Innovation and Effective Teachers Act. The bill reforms the federal approach to education by reforming the means by which educational achievement is assessed and allowing states the powers to delegate resources in a more effective and prudent manner.

The Act looks to reduce and reform spending under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Under this failed federal expansion of education policy, teachers are rewarded based on credentials and seniority. The current system does not hold instructors accountable for tangible improvements and student development.

H.R.3990 aims to evaluate education by means of student achievement. The bill also looks to reform the way classroom success is assessed. In the past, substantial assets have been spent on the impression that reducing class size has a direct result on education achievements, while no evidence supports this theory. The bill provides for performance-based evaluation of teachers and allows districts to reward effective teachers with differential incentive pay and training or certification resources.

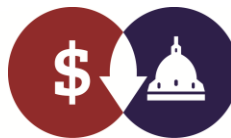
The Act eliminates 70 unsuccessful and duplicative federal programs, allowing states greater flexibility in dictating where scarce education dollars can be best utilized.

The current approach to federal education policy applies a 'one size fits all' mentality that has failed to encourage student development and effective classroom practices. The Encouraging Innovation and Effective Teachers Act shifts decisions to the state and local levels and provides support for private sector initiatives, such as charter schools, that have shown to be effective allies in improving education.

The above are steps toward successful education policy that rewards effective teachers and incentivizes real student improvement. Consequently, we applaud and encourage fellow lawmakers to support H.R. 3990 and look forward to working with you in continuing the fight against ineffective and imprudent federal spending.

Sincerely,

Grover Norquist
President
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